

**SECRET**

*D*

*B AB*

S E C R E T 232011Z MAR 87 STAFF

CITE FBIS/PANAMA CITY 16402

TO: FBIS.

OPS

SUBJECT: INTERNET REQUEST STATUS

REF: FBIS/PANAMA CITY 16304

*cc: c/MOD  
c/FSB  
c/ICCS*

25X1

1. EMBASSY ECON COUNSELOR MET ON 18 MARCH WITH ANTONIO CORREA, HEAD OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DESK IN GOP FOREIGN MINISTRY, TO DISCUSS STATUS OF INTERNET REQUEST. COUNSELOR REPORTS THAT CORREA WAS SINCERELY CONFUSED ABOUT INTERNET REQUEST. THUS, COUNSELOR STARTED FROM SCRATCH AND EXPLAINED ONCE AGAIN THE INTERNET CONCEPT AND HOW FREQUENCY WAS NOT RELATED TO THE ALREADY APPROVED MICROWAVE REQUEST.

2. CORREA PROMISED THAT WE WOULD RECEIVE RESPONSE ON INTERNET REQUEST SOON. ECON COUNSELOR ASKED IF RESPONSE WOULD BE POSITIVE, AND CORREA ANSWERED, YES.

3. AMBASSADOR HAS ALREADY CALLED FOREIGN MINISTER TWICE ON INTERNET REQUEST SINCE WE RECEIVED APPROVAL OF MICROWAVE REQUEST. THUS, BELIEVE NECESSARY PRESSURE IS BEING MAINTAINED.

4. CAN ONLY SPECULATE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO INTERNET REQUEST. PERHAPS WHEN GOP SAID EARLIER THAT IT WAS APPROVING "BOTH" REQUESTS IT MEANT OUR ORIGINAL 29 MAY NOTE AND THE FOLLOWUP 4 DECEMBER NOTE ON THE MICROWAVE REQUEST. HOWEVER, SINCE TWO GOP MINISTRIES -- FOREIGN AND GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE -- ARE NOW DEEPLY INVOLVED IN RESPONDING TO OUR REQUESTS, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY JUST HOW AND WHY COMMUNICATION FALTERED.

DECL OADR DRV COV 2-82.

S E C R E T

**SECRET**